

FIRST DAY

MORNING MEETING

The opening session of the One Hundred Thirty-Fourth Annual Conference of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, which Conference was held in the Tabernacle on Temple Square in Salt Lake City, Utah, convened Saturday morning, April 4, 1964, at 10:00 a.m., with President David O. McKay presiding and conducting.

The Tabernacle Choir was present and furnished the musical numbers for this session. Richard P. Condie directed the singing. Elder Alexander Schreiner was the organ accompanist.

President McKay made the following introductory remarks:

President David O. McKay: (Opening Remarks)

Never before, I think, have I felt so happy to greet my brethren and sisters assembled in this Tabernacle. I am especially glad to see Sister McKay in her usual place. I thank all of you in her behalf for your faith and prayers.

The proceedings of this Annual Conference, through radio and television, will reach a potential audience of ninety million people. We are living in the most enlightened age of man's history. Scientists, inventors, and others have been inspired during the past ages by an overruling Providence. We owe a debt of gratitude to the dedicated men and women who have applied these inventions and discoveries for the guidance, convenience, and blessing of mankind. Now, because of this service and dedication, we are able to transmit in a brief period the messages of the General Authorities of the Church to millions throughout the world.

We express appreciation to the men—experts in the field of communications—who are assisting the Church today in its efforts to bring the glad tidings of the Gospel to the peoples of the earth. May God help us to appreciate fully all the blessings he has bestowed upon us, and to take advantage of all the light and knowledge he has revealed to us.

The Tabernacle Choir, here in full numbers this opening session, will now favor us with "The Wintry Day Descending To Its Close." The opening prayer will be offered by Elder Gerald G. Smith, formerly President of the Eastern States Mission.

The Tabernacle Choir sang: "The Wintry Day Descending To Its Close," following which the opening prayer was offered by Elder Gerald G. Smith, formerly President of the Eastern States Mission.

President David O. McKay:

Elder LeGrand Richards while attending a stake conference in Cedar City was stricken with a slight heart attack. We all join in the prayer that was offered for his comfort and speedy restoration.

Yesterday at about five o'clock Sister Dilworth Young passed to her great reward. She is now relieved from all her suffering, and our sympathy goes out to Brother Young in his bereavement, and our commendation for his close attention to his loved wife.

(No song) (Pres. McKay gives Opening Address)

PRESIDENT DAVID O. McKAY

"Blessed are they who do His Commandments." (Rev. 22-14.)

Many years ago there was a story told in one of our early school books about some young people who were sailing

down the river towards Niagara Falls. A man on the shore cried out to them: "Young men, Ahoy, the rapids are below you!"

But they heeded not his warning call until they realized too late that they

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were in the midst of the rapids. With all the power at their command they failed to turn their boat upstream, "So," said the man who tried to warn them, "shrieking and cursing, over they went!"

The lesson left an indelible impression upon me; but today it seems incomplete. It is one thing to stand on the shore and cry, "Young men, Ahoy—there is danger ahead," and it is another thing to row into the stream, and, if possible, get into the boat with the young men, and by companionship, by persuasion, by legitimate force, when necessary, turn the boat from the rapids. Too many of us are satisfied to stand on the shore and cry, "There is danger ahead."

This morning, I have in mind giving a warning to all young people relating to three dangers threatening the success and happiness of Youth:

First, the pernicious habit of smoking cigars.

Second, the increasing number of divorces.

Third, the tendency to hold less sacred the moral standards.

The Habit of Smoking

One Hundred and thirty-one years ago the Prophet Joseph Smith received a revelation "showing forth the order and will of God in the temporal salvation of all saints in the last days." (D&C 89:2.) It relates to the physical, the intellectual, the moral, and the spiritual nature of man. It deals particularly with the relation of man's appetite to health and vigor. A person's reaction to his appetites and impulses when they are aroused gives the measure of that person's character. In such reactions are revealed the man's power to govern, or his forced servility to yield. That phase of the Word of Wisdom, therefore, which refers to intoxicants, drugs, and stimulants, goes deeper than the ill effects upon the body, and strikes at the very root of character building itself.

Strong Drinks and Tobacco are Not Good for Man

The revelation says that strong drinks and tobacco are not good for man. This is a clear, definite statement which has

stood the test of well over a century. It was made by a man only twenty-seven years of age, who from the standpoint of human learning, knew but little about physiology, hygiene, or the relation of mind and body to character and spirituality. His knowledge came from inspiration. With a conviction unwavering, with an assurance that the statement would stand all tests and experiments, he declared that strong drinks and tobacco, excepting only when used externally, are not good for man.

During the last one hundred years, the marvelous advance of science has made it possible for man to determine by experiments the ill effect of intoxicants and drugs upon the nerves and tissues of the human body. Observation and experiment have demonstrated their effects upon character. All such experiments and observations have proved the truth of the young man's statement: "Strong drinks and tobacco are not good for man."

Respect for another's rights and property is fundamental in good government. It is a mark of refinement in any individual; it is a fundamental Christian virtue. Nicotine seems to dull, if not to kill completely this trait of true culture, and women unfortunately have become its pitiable victims, and the worst offenders in society. There are still a few public conveyances that carry non-smoking compartments; a few eating places with signs, "No Smoking." In violation of such placards, it is not infrequent, however, to see a woman with utter disregard for the feelings of her fellow-passengers, among the first in an airplane or on a train to light a cigarette.

Many public buildings are often littered with burnt-out matches and stubs of cigarets and cigars. Many costly fires in hotels, apartment houses and homes are started by burning cigarets carelessly dropped or thrown aside.

If men and women must smoke, and it seems that many are now slaves to that habit, then for the sake of cleanliness and neatness, as well as of consideration for others, let them refrain from marring furniture, carpets, etc., and from strewing ashes and cigarette stubs in buildings where people assem-

ble either for pleasure or instruction.

But aside from all this, science has now proved that there is a far greater danger associated with cigaret smoking.

Dr. George James, Health Commissioner of New York City, said on March 17, 1964 that he "knows that within the next six months one thousand cigaret smokers in New York will die of lung cancer, throat cancer, and other diseases because of their tobacco habit."

On Saturday, January 11, 1964, newspapers throughout the country published the following statement:

"A special government scientific team Saturday linked cigaret smoking to five forms of cancer, and termed the habit a health hazard which needs 'appropriate remedial action.'" This long-awaited report by ten scientists and physicians declared that a series of studies showed that "the mortality ratio of cigaret smokers over nonsmokers was particularly high for a number of diseases."

I appeal to young men and women everywhere to refrain from this obnoxious habit, not only for the effect it has on their character, but also because of the alarming proofs from doctors and scientists that it is one of the chief causes of cancer.

Increasing Number of Divorces

Another threat to our society is the increasing number of divorces and the tendency to look upon marriage as a mere contract that may be severed at the first difficulty or misunderstanding that may arise.

One of our most precious possessions is our families. The domestic relations precede, and, in our present existence, are worth more than all other social ties. They give the first throb to the heart and unseal the deep fountains of its love. Home is the chief school of human virtues. Its responsibilities, joys, sorrows, smiles, tears, hopes, and solicitudes form the chief interests of human life.

"To make a happy fireside clime
To weans and wife,
That's the true pathos and sublime
O' human life."—Robert Burns

When one puts business or pleasure above his home, he that moment starts on the downgrade to soul-weakness. When the club becomes more attractive to any man than his home, it is time for him to confess in bitter shame that he has failed to measure up to the supreme opportunity of his life and flunked in the final test of true manhood. No other success can compensate for failure in the home. The poorest shack in which love prevails over a united family is of greater value to God and future humanity than any other riches. In such a home God can work miracles and will work miracles.

Pure hearts in a pure home are always in whispering distance of heaven.

In the light of scripture, ancient and modern we are justified in concluding that Christ's ideal pertaining to marriage is the unbroken home, and conditions that cause divorce are violations of his divine teaching.

Some of those conditions I name as unfaithfulness on the part of either the husband or wife, or both—habitual drunkenness, physical violence, long imprisonment that disgraces the wife and family, the union of an innocent girl to a reprobate. In these and perhaps other cases there may be circumstances which make the continuance of the marriage state a greater evil than divorce. But these are extreme cases—they are the mistakes, the calamities in the realm of marriage. If we could remove them, I would say there never should be a divorce. It is Christ's ideal that home and marriage should be perpetual—eternal.

Marriage is a sacred relationship entered into for purposes that are well recognized—primarily for the rearing of a family.

I know of no other place where happiness abides more securely than in the home. It is possible to make home a bit of heaven. Indeed, I picture heaven as a continuation of the ideal home. Some man has said: "Home filled with contentment is one of the highest hopes of this life."

An ever-decreasing birthrate, and an increasing divorce rate are ominous signs threatening the stability of the home and the perpetuity of any nation.

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In order to lessen the breaking-up of homes, we should substitute the present tendency toward a low view of marriage by the lofty view which Jesus Christ gives it. Let us look upon marriage as a sacred obligation and a covenant that is eternal or that may be made eternal.

Young people of both sexes should be taught the responsibilities and ideals of marriage so that they may realize that marriage involves obligation and is not an arrangement to be terminated at pleasure. They should be taught that pure love between the sexes is one of the noblest things on earth and the bearing and rearing of children the highest of all human duties. In this regard, it is the duty of parents to set an example in the home that children may see and absorb the sacredness of family life and the responsibility associated therewith.

The number of broken marriages can be reduced if couples realize even before they approach the altar that marriage is a state of mutual service, a state of giving as well as of receiving, and that each must give of himself or herself to the utmost.

The most vicious enemy to home life is immorality.

Of this evil, Victor Hugo writes impressively:

"The holy law of Jesus Christ governs our civilization; but it does not yet permeate it; it is said that slavery has disappeared from European civilization. That is a mistake. It still exists; but it preys now only upon woman, and it is called prostitution."

This corroding evil is just as demoralizing to men as to women. In The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints there is no double standard of morality. The young man should approach the marriage altar just as fit for fatherhood as his sweetheart is worthy of motherhood.

Chastity, not indulgence during the pre-marital years, is the source of harmony and happiness in the home, and the chief contributing factor to the health and perpetuity of the race. Loyalty, dependability, confidence, trust, love of God, and fidelity to man are associated with this diadem in the crown of virtuous womanhood and

virile manhood. The word of the Lord to his Church is: "Keep yourself unspotted from the sin of the world." (See James 1:27; D&C 59:9.)

The foundation of a noble character is integrity. By this virtue the strength of a nation, as of an individual, may be judged. No nation will become great whose trusted officers will pass legislation for personal gain, who will take advantage of public office for personal preferment, or to gratify vain ambition, or who will, through forgery, chicanery, and fraud, rob the government, or be false in office to a public trust.

Honesty, sincerity of purpose, must be dominant traits of character in leaders of a nation that would be truly great.

"I hope," said George Washington, "that I may ever have virtue and firmness enough to maintain what I consider to be the most enviable of all titles—the character of an honest man."

It was Washington's character more than his brilliancy of intellect that made him the choice of all as their natural leader when the thirteen original colonies decided to sever their connection with the mother country. As one in eulogy to the father of our country truly said: "When he appeared among the eloquent orators, the ingenious thinkers, the vehement patriots of the Revolution, his modesty and temperate profession could not conceal his superiority; he at once, by the very nature of his character, was felt to be their leader."

Let us in The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, as citizens of this beloved land, use our influence to see that men and women of upright character, of unimpeachable honor, are elected to office; that our homes are kept unpolluted and unbroken by infidelity; that children therein will be trained to keep the commandments of the Lord, to be honest, true, chaste, benevolent, and virtuous, and to do good to all men. (See Thirteenth Article of Faith.)

Cherishing such ideals, we can with all our hearts say with the poet Longfellow:

"Thou, too, sail on, O Ship of State
Sail on, O Union, strong and great!
Humanity with all its fears,

With all the hopes of future years,
Is hanging breathless on thy fate!

May members of the Church of Jesus Christ, preaching the restored gospel to the peoples of the earth, ever remember the Savior's injunction: "Ye are the light of the world. . . ."

"Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven." (Matt. 5:14, 16.) That we may sense this responsibility, I humbly pray in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

President David O. McKay:

Following a brief Tabernacle Organ Interlude, the Tabernacle Choir will

sing, "Holy, Holy, Hosanna in the Highest," with Brother Albert D. Fallows as soloist.

Selection by the Choir, "Holy, Holy, Hosanna In The Highest." (Solo by Albert D. Fallows)

President David O. McKay:

We welcome all those who have just joined us by radio and television in this session of the One Hundred Thirty-fourth Annual Conference of the Church, convened in the Tabernacle on Temple Square in Salt Lake City.

We shall now hear from Elder A. Theodore Tuttle, of the First Council of Seventy, and president of the South American Mission.

ELDER A. THEODORE TUTTLE

Of the First Council of the Seventy

I want to testify, my brothers and sisters and friends, that he to whom we have just listened is indeed a prophet of the Living God, and if we can follow and comprehend this inspired message it will bring a solution to the evils that beset us in this day and age.

Greetings from 40,000 Members

Two years ago from this pulpit I brought you greetings from 20,000 members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in South America. Today, because of the bounteous blessings of the Lord and the dedicated efforts of missionaries and members alike, I am privileged to bring you greetings from more than 40,000 members of the Church. Thirty-three years were required to convert the first 10,000 members in South America. Only two more years were required to convert the next 10,000. Since I reported two years ago, 21,000 more converts have found the truth in the seven missions of South America.

In an atmosphere unfriendly to the biblical doctrines of continued revelation, a Church founded on prophets and Apostles, belief in a Personal Father in heaven, and Jesus Christ as the actual and divine Son of God, how can a Church that teaches these biblical doc-

trines grow so rapidly? What is it that brings people into the restored gospel in such unprecedented numbers in these South American countries?

Return with me to this great land to get some feeling of the people among whom the Spirit of the Lord is working.

We find ourselves on a plane flying between Porto Alegre, Brazil, and Buenos Aires, Argentina. Seated next to me is an executive of a large international corporation. Upon learning that I was a representative of the Mormon Church, he asked, "What would a man like me have to do to join the Mormon Church?"

Conversions in South America

Since he was smoking as he drank his cocktail, I commenced by suggesting that he would first have to give up both of these habits and abstain from the use of tea and coffee as well. I started to mention such other necessary requirements as faith, repentance, and baptism, when he interrupted by saying, "Under those restrictions, can you get anybody down here to join your church?" "Yes," I replied. "Thousand of people join the Church in these lands; in fact, in Uruguay the ratio of conversion to population is as great as any place in the world. In fact I know a member who has helped to bring ninety-three other